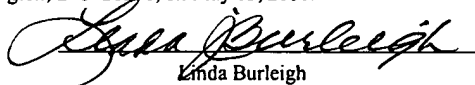


CERTIFICATE OF MAILING BY "FIRST CLASS MAIL"

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Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on May 15, 2001.


Linda Burleigh

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the application of:

BANAS et al.

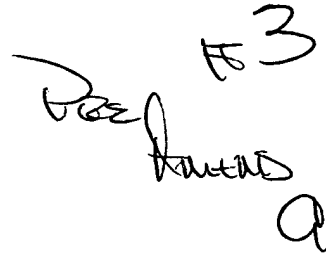
Serial No.: 08/999,583

Filing Date: December 22, 1997

For: HELICALLY SUPPORTED GRAFT

Examiner: Paul Prebelic

Group Art Unit: 3738



PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

This preliminary amendment is filed concurrently with a divisional application from the parent application listed above. Applicants respectfully request that the claim amendments be entered prior to calculation of fees.

In the Title

Please change the title to read as follows:

--EXTERNALLY SUPPORTED GRAFT--

In the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph: